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Executive Registry

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THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE REFERRAL

MARCH 12, 1986

TO: CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY ATTN: LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

ACTION REQUESTED:

APPROPRIATE ACTION

REMARKS: ALSO REFERRED TO DOS

DESCRIPTION OF INCOMING:

ID: 377968

MEDIA: LETTER, DATED FEBRUARY 21, 1986

TO: PRESIDENT REAGAN

FROM: THE HONORABLE GERRY E. STUDDS

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON DC 20515

SUBJECT: EXPRESS ALARM OVER REPORTS CONCERNING U. S.

POLICY TOWARD HONDURAS. MENTION A SPECIFIC NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE THAT ALLEGES THAT THE CIA AIDED HONDURAN SECURITY FORCES THAT IT KNEW WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR HAVING KILLED A NUMBER OF PEOPLE DETAINED FOR POLITICAL REASONS. IF THESE REPORTS ARE UNTRUE,

SUGGEST THAT A DECLARATION TO THAT EFFECT BE

PROMPT ACTION IS ESSENTIAL -- IF REQUIRED ACTION HAS NOT BEEN TAKEN WITHIN 9 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT, PLEASE TELEPHONE THE UNDERSIGNED AT 456-7486.

RETURN CORRESPONDENCE, WORKSHEET AND COPY OF RESPONSE (OR DRAFT) TO: AGENCY LIAISON, ROOM 91, THE WHITE HOUSE

SALLY KELLEY DIRECTOR OF AGENCY LIAISON PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

March 4, 1986

Dear Mr. Kostmayer:

Thank you for your February 21 letter to the President, cosigned by five of your colleagues, requesting information concerning certain aspects of U.S. policy toward Honduras.

Your inquiry is being directed to the President's foreign policy advisers to ensure that your questions about specific news articles are given appropriate attention. You should be receiving an additional response in the near future.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

William L. Ball III
Assistant to the President

The Honorable Peter H. Kostmayer House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

WLB: KRJ: hlb

cc: w/copy of inc to Legis Affrs, State for DRAFT response in coordination with CIA and routed through NSC

cc: w/copy of inc to Legis Affrs, CIA - for appropriate action

cc: w/copy of inc to NSC Secretariat - FYI

ID# 377968

THE WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: FEBRUARY 25, 1986

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE GERRY E. STUDDS

SUBJECT: REQUESTS INFORMATION REGARDING CERTAIN ASPECTS OF U.S. POLICY TOWARD HONDURAS

	AC	CTION	DISPOSITION		
ROUTE TO: . OFFICE/AGENCY (STAFF NAME)	ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD		COMPLETED YY/MM/DD	
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REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE (ROOM 75,0EOB) EXT-2590 KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT.

March 4, 1986

Dear Mr. Kostmayer:

Thank you for your February 21 letter to the President, cosigned by five of your colleagues, requesting information concerning certain aspects of U.S. policy toward Honduras.

Your inquiry is being directed to the President's foreign policy advisers to ensure that your questions about specific news articles are given appropriate attention. You should be receiving an additional response in the near future.

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William L. Ball III
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GERRY E. STUDDS
10TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

WASHINGTON OFFICE.

1501 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
202-225-3111

COMMITTEES:
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MERCHANT MARINE AND
FISHERIES

CHAIRMAN: SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND NAVIGATION Congress of the United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 GREATER NEW BEDFORD POST OFFICE BUILDING NEW BEDFORD, MA 02740 617-999-1251

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SOUTH SHORE HAMOVER COURT 183 ROCKLAMD STREET HAMOVER, MA 02339 617-826-3866

CAPE AND ISLANDS 146 MAIN STREET HYANNIS, MA 02601 617-771-0666

February 21, 1986

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Dear Mr. President:

Recent press reports have reinforced earlier concerns expressed by ourselves and by other Members of Congress concerning certain aspects of U.S. policy toward the Central American country of Honduras.

Our purpose in writing is to solicit from you a clear statement concerning the facts that are at issue in this controversy.

Last week, the New York Times reported that "the Central Intelligence Agency aided Honduran security forces that it knew were responsible for having killed a number of people detained for political reasons between 1981 and 1984." The story, which cited two American officials and a Honduran military officer as sources, quoted one of the Americans as saying that, "The CIA had nothing to do with picking people up, but they knew about it and when some people disappeared, they looked the other way."

Similar allegations were made in Washington eighteen months ago by a major in the Honduran Army, Ricardo Zuniga, now deceased. Major Zuniga also stated that his attempt -- and that of other Honduran officers -- to seek a full investigation into the disappearances, was being opposed by officials from the U.S. Embassy and the CIA. Major Zuniga alleged that U.S. officials were urging Honduran military and political leaders to purge him and certain other officers from the military because of their desire to seek an honest investigation, and to explore, in particular, the role that exiles affiliated with the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) played in those crimes.

Last November 19, the Christian Science Monitor cited both American and Honduran sources in reporting that "reformist officers continue to press for the punishment of military and intelligence personnel who are guilty of human rights abuses. According to these sources, the more conservative officers, and much of the U.S. intelligence establishment in Honduras, continue to oppose such a move...reformist officers believe that many in the U.S. intelligence and military communities are still pressing for their removal."

The President February 21, 1986 Page 2

On January 31 of this year, the New York Times reported that "Central Intelligence Agency operatives have played a key part in ... attempting to weaken or isolate a group of young nationalist officers considered to be critical of U.S. policy in Honduras."

Obviously, these stories, if true, are deeply disturbing. U.S. foreign policy in Central America has been repeatedly depicted by officials in your Administration as being committed to the observation and protection of human rights. A failure on the part of the U.S. to expose or to seek to halt a pattern of murders carried out by a U.S. trained or supported group would be impossible to justify.

Our concerns would be magnified if it were true that U.S. officials had attempted to purge or isolate Honduran military officers who sought, on their own, to identify, expel, or bring to justice those responsible for these crimes.

If these reports are, as we hope, untrue, we believe it would be in the best interests of the United States if a clear and unambiguous declaration to that effect were issued.

For this reason, we would like to respectfully request that your Administration provide a complete and forthright answer to the following three questions:

- 1) Were any U.S. officials aware that murders were being carried out by U.S. trained Honduran military personnel during the period from 1981 to 1984 and, if so, what actions were taken in response to that knowledge?
- 2) Were any U.S. officials aware that murders were being carried out in Honduras by persons affiliated with the FDN during this period and, if so, what actions were taken in response to that knowledge?
- 3) Has any official of the U.S. Government attempted to influence the military assignment, promotion, or continued military service of officers of the Honduran Army, or in any other way sought to discourage the public disclosure by the Honduran armed forces of the facts surrounding the murders and disappearances that occurred during this period?

We want to thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Gerry F. Studds, M.C.

Michael D. Barnes, M.C.

The President February 21, 1986 Page 3

Robert Garcia, M.C.

Ted Weiss, M.C.

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Sam Gejdenson M.C

Peter H. Kostmayer, M.C.